

Compassion Sunday 2021

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[0 : 0 0] So, anybody listening online, thanks for listening. Glad you're here. We are pushing pause today in our sermon series, Look to the Rock, because today is Compassion Sunday at all the sites across One Harbor Church. And I'm going to be preaching out of Mark chapter 6 today. If you have a Bible, you can start turning there right now. I always want to recommend, man, come to church with your Bible. It's a good practice. It's good to get to know that thing. It is our sword, and it's good to be familiar with God's Word. If you don't have a Bible, we do have extra Bibles, kind of like, you know, for you to utilize while you're here in the service. Also, if you don't have one, we could give you a Bible as well. Just let us know after the service. We'd love to make that happen. So, what is Compassion Sunday? Well, Compassion Sunday is a day where we stop to remember those in poverty around the world. And actually, it's our attempt to make some impact in pushing back the darkness of poverty. So, why should we care about impacting poverty? Well, the biggest reason is that God has a soft spot for the poor, believe it or not. And you know what? When he looks at you and me, he sees spiritual poverty. When Jesus came down to earth because God looked down, and it's not because we had it all together. Spiritually speaking, our hearts and our souls weren't in a condition of holiness. We were not like God at all. In fact, we had a huge deficit. Because of sin, we were in major debt to God. And so, it's very much we exist and lived in the spiritual poverty. And that's why God had to come through Jesus, through his death on the cross, and rescue us. He stepped in.

But God's care for the spiritual poor also translates into the care for the vulnerable in society as well. In fact, back in the New Testament, from the early days of the church, that's what the church did, man. They leaned into and cared for the slaves and the widows and the orphans, the vulnerable in society.

The New Testament church always made it a priority. In fact, the apostles, when they would go out, they once told Paul, you know, go carry this message of the gospel, but don't neglect the poor. You know, it's like, yes, preach the good news, but don't neglect the poor wherever you go.

And so, today, the church carries on that tradition. Not because it's part of the rules and we have to do it, because it's the very heart of our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ. That's why we do it. And today's reading shows how Jesus puts on display both his and the Father's love for the poor.

So, Mark 6, verse 30. Here's what it says. The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while. For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. I mean, that's pretty busy when you can't even stop to have lunch.

[2 : 53] And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now, many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, this is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat. But he answered them, you give them something to eat. And they said to him, shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat? Just to give you an idea, denarii is the equivalent of a day's wage back in that day. Shall we go and buy 200 days wages worth of bread and give it to them to eat?

And he said to them, how many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they had found out, they said, five and two fish. Then he commanded them all to sit in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people.

And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up 12 baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were 5,000 men.

This is God's word. So this is a memorable story in the life of Jesus. In fact, it's one of the, it's one of the only miracles that is an all account. Every single gospel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all have this story of feeding the 5,000. It's also important to remember the 5,000, it says feeding 5,000 men. It doesn't account for women and children. And if you account for the women and children, it's probably more like around 10,000 people. It's probably close to a crowd of 10,000 people that were there that were fully fed. And what we see here is that Jesus pulls off the impossible.

That's what this is. It puts Jesus into a category all his own. Only someone with supernatural ability could multiply five loaves and two fish into a feast that feeds that many people. But there's a lot more to this story than just that miracle. It starts actually with Jesus caring deeply for his disciples' physical welfare. What does it say in verse 31? It says, Jesus invites them to get away from the crowds and to rest. Remember it said, I mean, they were so busy, they didn't even have any leisure time to eat. They didn't have one little downtime to get a little snack of bread or anything. I mean, we're all pretty busy, but I don't know if any of us are that busy where we can't stop and like grab a granola bar and shoot, you know, get down on something, right? And what's interesting is that, man, you see Jesus and his disciples ministering and doing those things, but we don't often think of Jesus this other way where he is like, yeah, Lord and Savior, and he loves us because he dies for us, but there's another aspect of how he loves and cares for us. Jesus sees and cares about our physical needs as his disciples.

[6 : 05] He cares about our tiredness. He cares about our weariness. He cares about those days when we're feeling stretched thin and hungry. See, the context of this is that the apostles had just returned from a short-term mission trip. Jesus had sent them out, and he sent them out two by two to preach, and he gave them power to cast out demons and heal the sick, and so they came back like successful ministry stories telling Jesus all that they had done, and what's interesting here is that it implies Jesus is listening. They're telling him all the success they had, and Jesus is digging it. Jesus is celebrating the kingdom wins with them, which is awesome to think about. Every disciple that was made while they were out preaching the good news, every sickness that was healed, every darkness in that society that was being pushed back by the disciples as they went out two by two, we see Jesus here listening to those accounts and celebrating those kingdom wins, but what we can underappreciate is what Jesus does for his disciples in verse 31 and 32. It isn't all about ministry all the time. He cares about things like tiredness and hungry stomachs too, and we can get so overly spiritual about Jesus that we discount these as lesser things. Jesus really doesn't care if I'm hungry. Jesus really doesn't care if I'm tired. Jesus really doesn't care if I'm the brink of burnout. Actually, he does. He cares deeply about that. He cares deeply about our physical well-beings, and Jesus is the good shepherd that leads us to quiet streams and green pastures. In fact, in the account of this where it says he has compassion on them, and he asks them to sit down. He asks them to sit down in green. It's like the Hebrew there. He asks them to sit down in green pastures, very nice pastures. So we shouldn't feel guilty for taking rest.

Jesus leads us to rest. He leads us into rest. The disciples were following him into rest, away from the crowds, away from the ministry responsibilities. They were pushing pause on that, and resting this way is good for us because it keeps our identity from being wrapped up in what we do for God. That can easily happen, right? We start serving Jesus, and it's like that becomes our identity. We can't not serve Jesus because if we don't, we think something's wrong. We think, oh my goodness, God's not going to love us as much or care for us as much, or maybe he's not going to need our needs as efficiently and sufficiently as we think. But here's the thing.

God wants us to rest. God wants us to lay down those things because he wants us to be satisfied in being with him. That's important. And we need to be intentional as disciples of Jesus about doing nothing for the glory of God sometimes. Now, here's the thing. We can swing this idea too far the other way and start to think the monastic lifestyle is true religion and really take a back seat and like never get involved in anything. But this story gives us some insight that rest in Jesus isn't this like rigid religious practice either. Resting in Jesus should be healthy rhythms in our life, but it can't become this rigid demand. And this requires some wisdom. Like, when do you rest? When do you not rest?

It requires wisdom, and it requires being led by the Holy Spirit. And we should regularly schedule times of rest in our lives, particularly times of isolation. We're away from crowds and the craziness of life simply just to be with God and with family and with those and with his creation and enjoying him in those things. And the reason it's important is that sometimes it's going to be interrupted.

But that's what happens when compassion hits you. You take on the interruption or disruption or whatever is rupturing at the time. Compassion is why Jesus leads his disciples into rest, but it's also why he postpones their rest. In verse 33, it says, now many saw them, the crowds, saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things. I mean, if you think about that, the disciples are so tired, and Jesus says, hey, man, we're going on vacation right now. Little road trip. They're just about to check into the hotel, and the crowds show up. I mean, you talk about, like, deflating.

[10 : 40] That's tough. It's tough when you have this expectation, and this desire, and it's right there, and then somehow it gets taken away. Your vacation gets interrupted. I think of, like, it's like, what about Bob, that movie, you know? It's like the doctor goes on vacation, and he has this patient that just won't leave him alone. But Jesus, what he doesn't do, he doesn't send them away, interestingly enough, which is like, man, what's the message you're sending here, Jesus? What's going on? And he pushes pause on the disciples' rest, and he begins to minister to the crowds.

But notice what Jesus is doing just before it says he has compassion on them. It says he saw, which teaches us something important about compassion. Looking leads to compassion.

One of the names of God that he gives himself in the scriptures is the God who sees. And this is sobering, and this is sobering in a lot of ways. Like, he's like the eye of Sauron, like nothing escapes his gaze, right? But this God who sees isn't malevolent. He's actually, he's merciful, and he's gracious, and he's good, and he's righteous, and he's just, which means his unceasing looking makes his heart this unending fountain of compassion. He never stops looking at us.

He never stops looking at our situation. There is no corner of the world that you can find yourself. Like David says, like, you can go to the depths of the ocean. You can go to the darkest caves to try to flee from God. Guess what? Can't escape his gaze there.

And like we see in this story, his compassion, it moves him to action, which is what compassion is.

[12 : 26] Compassion is actually a verb. It's to compassionate towards somebody. It's to be filled with so much pity for somebody in the state that they're in. They're saying, man, I cannot help but act and respond to this. So verse 34, the second part of verse 34 says, Jesus began to teach them many things. This is his response, compassionate response. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, this is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the countryside, the surrounding countryside and villages, and buy themselves something to eat.

But he answered them, you give them something to eat. The disciples want to send them away. The disciples see a problem, and they're lacking compassion because of that. They don't see people, they see a problem. They see an inconvenience. They see a disruption to their well-laid plans of rest, right? They're like, Jesus, can you get them out of the way? The hotel is right there. I can see it.

There's like, you know, shrimp cocktail and a jacuzzi that I need to get to. But Jesus is filled with compassion, sees people in need, and is ready and willing to intervene. And that's what compassion does.

Compassion drives us to intervene and help. See, the surprising thing is that Jesus doesn't start with feeding them, right? He starts with teaching them. What's that all about? Well, it kind of shows us something, that God's compassion is always ultimately after the heart. It will minister to the stomach too, don't get me wrong, but it never neglects the heart. He sees a crowd of sheep that haven't been cared for well. You know, in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, God often referred to Israel's leaders as shepherds. Good shepherds led Israel well. They led them to obedience and to faithfulness and faithfulness to God and his law. Bad shepherds, they looked out for themselves.

They tried to use the people to enrich themselves. They dealt unjustly with the poor and those in need. They were greedy for all kinds of gain. They didn't stand up for God's truth. They didn't stand against idolatry. And they forsook the teaching of the law and forgot God's mighty acts that made them into a great nation. They were like, in those days, sheep without a shepherd. The shepherds had abandoned their role, and Jesus is saying the same thing. He sees a crowd that is a sheep without a shepherd, which is why he begins with teaching. He is giving them spiritual food. Godly compassion must address spiritual poverty too, but we mustn't think it stops there. You can see the disciples' fatigue start to manifest when they recommend that Jesus send the crowds away to fend for themselves. It's kind of like the take the responsibility for your own actions argument, right? Like, well, if you're poor, it's all your fault. Now, that may well be true in some cases, but it lacks the nuance of reality, and I think the nuance that the gospel accounts draw out. See, poverty is actually a complex combination of both people's nature, people's decisions, but it also accounts and takes into account the environment and the context that they're raised in. Everyone doesn't grow up in the same context. Everyone doesn't grow up in the same culture. We don't all start out with the same opportunities and resources. So Jesus rebuffs their recommended solution with his own command.

[15 : 57] You give them something to eat. You be the solution. Don't pass off their need onto someone else. Take the initiative is what he's telling his disciples. Now, let me just say this. I can empathize with Jesus's disciples here because they recognize the magnitude of what Jesus just told them to do. It seems like they had already got the math figured out in their head, right? Before they even go to Jesus to say it, it's like, well, if he says this, we can, we can like counter-argue this way. And so that's why they say to him in verse 37, shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?

I mean, that is a practical response to an impossible problem, right? I mean, what would it cost to feed 5,000 men plus women and children, right? Half a year's salary, over half a year's salary is what it would take. Now, let me just say this. This approach to mission is probably how many of us think about mission, like how many of us think about pushing back darkness, right? And it often keeps mission from moving forward. It's kind of the thing, man, if we can't solve everyone's problem, let's solve nobody's problem. But Jesus gives us a different approach to his impossible tasks. He gives a solution that tells us, stop thinking so big, think small and simple. And that's what verse 38 is about. He says to them, how many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they found out, they said, we have five and two fish. Jesus doesn't say, wait until you have enough fish and enough loaves gathered to start helping. He says, use what you got. Because Jesus only needs a little to do a lot. And I like this about

Jesus. He didn't use an army of angels to change the world. He started with 12 nobodies. In Acts, they were called ordinary uneducated men. And those 12 guys, spending time with Jesus for three years, went out and turned the world upside down. Jesus used what he had. When Peter and John saw the lame man begging at the temple in the book of Acts, they used what they had. Peter looked at him and said, I do not have silver and gold, buddy, but what I do have, I give to you. And they healed him in the name of Jesus and in the power of Jesus. Jesus can do a lot with a little bit of your faithfulness.

And that's what it took for this particular miracle of feeding the 5,000 to happen. That's what it took. They listened. The disciples listened, even though they were tired, and they trusted Jesus in that moment. And through the hands of his disciples, Jesus fed a multitude of people. Jesus did the impossible. Verse 39, then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass.

So they sat down in groups by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied.

[19 : 13] And they took up 12 baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were 5,000 men. We look at that and we think, man, that is so awesome. Wish I could have been a part of that. And I would say, guys, gals, Jesus still works this way today. But we have to be willing to let him use us.

We need to be looking, eyes open, to see where Jesus is working and where he is calling us to get involved. Here's the thing. He doesn't call us to end poverty. He doesn't. In fact, there's a moment in the Gospels where Jesus says, you're always going to have the poor with you. Until he returns, poverty is going to be a reality. But that doesn't mean that he doesn't call us to make an impact into poverty and to care about those that are needy. And in the same way, he doesn't call us to save our whole city.

Like success doesn't look like 100% of people in Havelock and New Bern believing in Jesus. But he does call us to be faithful. He does call us to be faithful disciples, faithful to open our eyes, faithful to look for those in spiritual and material poverty. And when we do that, our hearts will fill up with the same compassion as our Savior. And he will call us to act in small, simple ways.

So let's be faithful to give him the little that we have, the little that you and I have. Because when we do that, he does so much with it. Here's a video I'm going to show you of an area in Kenya where Compassion International, it's a, I'll tell you more about Compassion International in a minute, but it's where they do some work, one of the nations they do some work into.

And they're making a big impact through the little bit of faithfulness of many like you and me. Freedom is being able to live regardless of your circumstances. It's being not tied to the bondage of what the world gives as a story to you. Freedom is when where you live doesn't determine if you live.

[21 : 27] Our homes are 10 by 10 square foot shacks. An average family of five live in there. Boys live up to the age of 16. If you make it past there, either you're in crime or in prison. Girls here can become moms from as early as the age of 13. When they're 26, their child is 13, they're grandparents.

parents. All this is what builds up into the cycle of poverty here. My mom brewed illegal liquor, it's called chana, it's like an equivalent of moonshine. I would help her selling. I remember sometimes not having a single meal for four days.

We didn't want to be wealthy people, we just wanted enough. There's a lot of talent, there's a lot of skill, there's a lot of brains, only that nobody has tapped into it. Unless somebody ever does that to some of these people, this cycle will never end. Freedom is the opportunity to not have anything in this life dictate your future. This wasn't just my story, this is the story of so many people around here. Madhari is not a free place and if you come out of there, that's what freedom looks like.

It's sobering to see some of those images, huh? Just how people live in different spots around the world. But this video highlights so well both the privilege and the burden that we have at this moment. I've talked about this kind of burden already that Jesus puts on us to care for the poor, but helping the poor is not an optional extra in Christianity.

It is a burden we carry because it's God's burden. We care because he cares. But there's also this incredible privilege and you and I can get that privilege of sharing in that, of totally changing someone's life. And you can do the same thing, yeah, you can do this for someone. Compassion opens up this amazing opportunity for you and I to do that, which is why we really recommend it and commend it to us. And, you know, it's an us thing as a church that we want to get behind. And the reason we love compassion is because helping the poor is a complicated thing. It's not easy to do well, especially if you want to do more than just meet someone's immediate need. It's extraordinarily challenging to effectively change someone's life if they're locked in cycles of poverty like that man was talking about.

[24 : 16] And yet that's what compassion exists to do. And it's important that you know that compassion isn't a welfare ministry. It is a child advocacy and discipleship ministry that rescues and releases children from spiritual, economic, social, and physical poverty, with the goal being that each disciple becomes a responsible and fulfilled adult through the gospel of Jesus. Every child that gets sponsored through compassion will be given medical care, educational opportunities, basic provisions, and they will be taught life skills. They will be prepared to become a functional citizen and a leader in their community. But while all that is good and important, it's even more than that. They're introduced to Jesus Christ. In fact, all of this ministry compassion does is done through local churches on the ground in those contexts, which is so cool. And that's what we love about it. There is like a, there is a permanent kingdom outpost in each of these places where people, where these kids get to belong. That's, that's what happens when a child is sponsored. He or she gets all of those things that we talked about, the discipleship, the meals, the clothes, the immunizations, and it's through the compassion project that's located in that church. And they're making the church of Jesus in each of these countries the face of this ministry to these kids. That's a, that's a huge part of why they grow up loving Jesus and loving his church. And let me tell you, that's exactly what happens. Actually, we sent a couple of One Harbor Church pastors on a compassion trip before we decided to really get behind and partner with them. Because, you know, the Bible says, know those who labor among you. We wanted to see firsthand, like, what is going on? What is this ministry all about? And they reported back everything that compassion has been saying about themselves. Now, it's true that people on the ground there, they're pastors and they're leaders in the church. They know these kids. They're in the community. They know the families. They know people in the neighborhood. And those two guys, those two pastors, Donnie and Brian, they met at random people like the guy that was speaking,

Kennedy, who was speaking on that video. And other former compassion kids who are now leaders in their communities. And what stood out to them was that the kids valued what they valued most about the ministry. And they will tell you that great things happened to them. And it wasn't necessarily, the thing that they valued most wasn't necessarily that they got to go to college and learn a trade or break out of physical poverty. Over and over again, what they were told. And the thing that they loved most about compassion was that they were introduced to Jesus because of that. And that's what changed their lives. That was the huge part that, like, was the game changer for them, which is amazing. I mean, you combine, like, the truth of Jesus and the power of who he is on the cross and the redemption hymn and combine that with the ability to raise these kids out of the cycle of poverty.

It is a powerful picture of God's purpose of redemption. Another thing that was very clear in the report back that Donnie and Brian gave to us is how seriously compassion took these kids.

In fact, if you sponsor a child, when you write a letter, it goes through an intense screening process before the child ever sees it. And the reason they do that is because it protects them against potential child predators. I mean, that's a real thing that they have to worry about in this day and age. But they have all the checks and balances. They have all the firewalls to keep the wrong people from, like, getting into these kids' lives. And so that's a huge part of it and why we love it as well.

Now, our pastors only saw a few kids and they only saw a few compassion projects. But compassion currently sponsors over 2 million people, 2 million kids in 25 countries, which is an awesome thing.

[28 : 19] And we're talking about exceptional quality of care at a massive scale. That's what compassion is doing. But if 2 million people sounds like a lot, 2 million kids sound like a lot, that the need is orders of magnitude bigger than that. And it gets, actually, it gets bigger every day. So I don't know if you know this, for the last 25 years, global poverty rates have been getting smaller and smaller. But COVID reversed all of that. In like one year, for the first time in a quarter century, extreme poverty went on the rise again. And the number of people who live on less than \$2 per day is increasing. I know that 2020 was hard on all of us, but in nations that don't have things like economic stimulus plans, the last two years haven't just been hard, they've been actually lethal for them. Those who live in extreme poverty are increasingly vulnerable to infant mortality, hunger, disease, literacy, and child labor, among other things. So that's stuff that we want to make an impact on. That's stuff we have the opportunity today to make an impact on and push back that darkness of poverty. So here's the ask.

Let's flip that script for somebody. Sponsor a child or two or three. You can, maybe you've already sponsored a child. You can sponsor another one. You can sponsor as many as you like. Even if you're a business, man, you can sponsor a child as a business. It's okay. It will cost, getting practical here, it's going to cost \$38 a month per child, all of which is tax deductible, which is the equivalent of about 10 lattes or a few Big Macs a month. But foregoing that opens the door to totally change the trajectory of another human being's life. Now, you might be wondering like, okay, how much of the money I give actually gets to the child, all right? So out of every dollar you give, 85 cents goes directly to that child.

It's pretty good. Yes, compassion does have overhead, but they only use 50% or less of it, of the donation you have to cover that overhead. So please consider the opportunity before you. If you're already sponsoring a child, consider sponsoring another one. Remember that this is an opportunity for us. You might be thinking, man, \$38 doesn't really seem like a big deal, but remember, Jesus can do a lot with just a little. And through years of pouring into the life of another person, of writing them letters, hearing from them, perhaps even going overseas to meet them, which I know a lot of compassion sponsors in the past have been able to do, and it's been just a wonderful thing for both them and for the child. That if we do these things, we will come to the end of that, and having received more than we've given. So let's get practical. How do we actually respond today? What are we calling you guys to respond to today? First, if you are listening to this online, don't feel like you've missed out and missed your chance. You can still sponsor a child by texting the letters OHC. Text the letters OHC to this number, 83393. Text the letters OHC to 83393. Now, for those of us in the room, there's packets at these tables over here, and these children are all from the areas of Nicaragua,

Haiti, and Kenya, and we kept the same areas that we did last time. We did this two years ago, and we kept these same areas. So we just, hey, let's focus on a few places so we can, as a church, own it and impact poverty in those specific areas. So two quick things about the packets. First, you'll notice that the children don't look very poor. This isn't like them trying to pull one over on you. Actually, compassion purposefully doesn't make them look poor because they want to give these children dignity, and so they make sure that the children are clean, well-dressed, and presentable for the photos. But every one of them is living in poverty, okay?

Second, you cannot take your packets with you unless you sponsor the child. That packet is the only one that exists for that child in the world, and if you aren't sure whether or not, if you're like, maybe maybe I will, maybe I won't, we don't want to risk that packet getting lost because we'll give those all back. They'll get back to the compassion people, and those packets will get disseminated out to other churches and other places where they can get sponsored.

[32 : 58] So each packet looks like this. All right. A little, you know, picture of someone on the front has some information you can fill out on the back, and it is unique to this particular child. There's no, again, there's no other packet like in the world, and the top two sections, when you pull it out, you'll see a couple of sections. The top two sections that you fill out are for you to keep, okay? They have info about your child and also what your donation pays for. It gives you that information. You can keep those top two sections. The bottom part is what you fill out and turn in, and if sponsoring more than one child, you can fill one card out, just one of those completely, and then the remaining cards, you just staple that to, that one you filled out to the remaining cards, and yes, when doing multiples, you can complete that one and staple it to the others just for that completed card. Sorry, guys. I'm giving you a lot of information. We're going to have somebody up here to help out with that, so you don't feel like I'm getting so lost.

I don't know if I want to do this. Corey Kick, she'll be up here to help with any questions you may have. Here's the thing, like, so part of the things that you fill out is you're filling out some financial information. You can fill out either your debit card information, which defaults to a bank draft. If you would rather write a check, that is okay. You can do that, too, and you can write a check, staple it to the card, and that will begin to draft from that account. They'll see that check, the routing number, the account number. They'll start drafting from that particular account on a monthly basis, okay? If you have any other questions that we haven't answered, again, Corey will be at the table, and if she's not able to answer some of your questions, you can ask me. The guy from Compassion, one of the executive directors of Compassion is down in Moorhead. We have his number. We can reach out to him and ask him to get any of your questions answered, okay? Again, just one final reminder.

Our church, like we say, you know, we make disciples and push back darkness. That's what we want to do, and we do it all for the sake of the gospel, and today we are pushing back the darkness by rescuing children from poverty for the sake of the gospel. So let's change the world for a lot of kids today. Let me pray. Will you stand with me? And what I'm going to do is I'm going to pray.

You can be dismissed. If you want to come up and look at sponsoring a child again, you can go here and look at the cards on the table. Yeah, let's pray together.

Father, so Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are a good Father. We thank you that you are the God who sees. You see our needs. You see our hopelessness, and Lord, you stepped in. Father, you stepped in.

[35 : 46] Jesus, you stepped in. You came, and you walked among us. You lived the life we couldn't live. You came, and you spoke to us and taught us truth and fed us spiritually, but you also met our material needs as well, the simple needs that we have. And so we thank you for that. We thank you, God, that you care for these things. We thank you that you do that. And so I ask today, move on our hearts. We never want to manipulate emotionally, but I do pray that we would be moved by you, Holy Spirit, to respond.

Fill us with your compassion. Move us, Lord. Help us, Lord, to make an impact. We don't need to eradicate poverty in all of Kenya, but Lord, we recognize that you can do a lot with just a little bit of our faithfulness. And so we respond today with a little bit of faithfulness. Amen. Hey, thank you all for coming. So again, if you want to sign up, you can go do that right now. Otherwise, hey, feel free to stay. There's coffee back there. Don't forget about your kids before you leave. That would be a huge bummer.

All right? Be blessed, guys.